

VZCZCXRO9478
PP RUEHROV
DE RUEHKH #0954/01 1101433
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 201433Z APR 06 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2437
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000954

SIPDIS

AIDAC
SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/SPG, PRM, AND ALSO PASS USAID/W
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM, AF/EA, DCHA
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA, USAID/REDSO, AND FAS
USMISSION UN ROME
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
NAIROBI FOR SFO
NSC FOR JMELINE, TSHORTLEY
USUN FOR TMALY
BRUSSELS FOR PLERNER
ABUJA PLEASE PASS C. HUME

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [KAWC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: SUDAN: IDP RETURNS IN NORTHERN BAHR EL GHAZAL

KHARTOUM 00000954 001.2 OF 002

Summary and Comment

¶1. From April 10 to 12, a USAID representative visited Aweil town and Malualkon, located in Aweil East County in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, to assess the status of IDP returns. Overall, the U.N. is doing a good job coordinating the humanitarian response, monitoring sector coverage, and identifying gaps. Humanitarian agencies expect an estimated 35,000 to 40,000 returnees to arrive in Northern Bahr el Ghazal in 2006, which would result in a 3.6 percent increase in the state's population. Both spontaneous and organized returns are taking place from Khartoum and South Darfur. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), and other international agencies hope to pre-position key structures and assistance before the rains begin in May or June. End summary and comment.

Partners Working Well Together

¶2. From April 10 to 12, a USAID representative visited Aweil East County in Northern Bahr el Ghazal to attend the State Coordination Meeting in Aweil town and the State Contingency Planning Meeting in Malualkon. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SRRC) hosted the meetings. The USAID representative held additional individual meetings in each location with State Ministry of Health, USAID partners, and representatives of the humanitarian community, including OCHA, IOM, the U.N. Children's Fund, the U.N. Development Program, International Rescue Committee, Pact Inc., Tearfund, Concern, Cordaid, and Medecins Sans Frontieres/France.

¶3. OCHA is coordinating the humanitarian response to IDPs and returnees in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. OCHA assesses sector coverage and attempts to plug gaps through solicitation of donor funds and direction of

implementing partners. OCHA has developed a useful "who's doing what where" activities matrix for Northern Bahr el Ghazal. OCHA is also strongly encouraging NGOs to apply for funding through the U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund and the U.N. Common Humanitarian Fund.

¶4. OCHA estimates the current Northern Bahr el Ghazal population to be approximately 1.1 million. The estimates of the total number of returnees expected to arrive in the state this year range from 20,000 to 70,000. The most likely figure is around 35,000 to 40,000, with approximately 10,000 settling in and around urban areas. The arrival of 40,000 returnees this year would result in a 3.6 percent increase in the population.

Returns: Spontaneous, Organized, and Mixed

¶5. IOM is assisting the spontaneous return of an estimated 4,500 returnees from the Khartoum area. These returnees have temporarily settled in and around the areas of Kalama and Kiir Galama. In the first two days of this operation, which began on April 10, IOM assisted with the transport of more than 700 returnees to Jaac, from which point returnees can proceed to outlying areas on their own. WFP is providing 15-day full rations to these returnees. IOM is registering the returnees by intended destination and plans to continue the operation until all who have been registered have been transported to their home areas within the state.

¶6. Northern Bahr el Ghazal State has organized returns from the Khartoum area in conjunction with the GNU, without consulting the U.N. The U.N. is providing limited assistance, as U.N. policy is not to become involved with organized returns unless the U.N. has participated in planning the returns process from the

KHARTOUM 00000954 002.2 OF 002

onset. To date, an estimated 4,000 IDPs from the Khartoum area have returned to Aweil town, even though the majority is not from Aweil town. Field sources reported that transporters claimed that returns organizers made no distinction between Aweil East, Aweil North, Aweil West, Aweil South, and Aweil Central Counties. As a result, this group of returnees was transported to Aweil town. A tense situation followed the delivery of the returnees to Aweil town without any preparation to assist them; however, tensions have abated and most returnees have decided to continue to their home areas with some assistance from humanitarian agencies.

¶7. Separate efforts are underway to facilitate the return of IDPs currently South Darfur back to Northern Bahr el Ghazal. Humanitarian agencies estimate that as many as 10,000 IDPs from Northern Bahr el Ghazal currently in South Darfur will be registered. Agencies will help as many of these IDPs as possible return prior to the onset of the rainy season. This is the only organized return to Northern Bahr el Ghazal that the U.N. will fully support prior to the May and June rains. Registration of an initial group of 3,000 started in mid-April. USAID partner Concern will provide boats to assist with river crossings in and near Nyamlel, in Aweil West County.

¶8. Another large returnee group, as large as 2,000 according to SRRC estimates (NGOs from Aweil North and West say this estimate is high), that has settled in the Gok Machar area of Aweil North. The Gok Machar group appears to include those who returned spontaneously as well as via organized efforts. NGOs and the U.N. are assessing the situation and will respond as appropriate. WFP claims to have enough food for this group. Shelter seems to be the biggest immediate need as most of the

group is camping under trees.

Humanitarian Preparedness

19. U.N. agencies and NGOs are working together to accomplish critical tasks in the coming weeks before the rains. IOM plans to complete the way station in Warawar, near Malualkon, by April 21. WFP has pre-positioned 16 rubhalls in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. WFP is satisfied that it will have enough food pre-positioned prior to the onset of the rainy season to meet the emergency food needs in the state for both residents and returnees. The NGO Cordaid will distribute WFP rations in Aweil West and Aweil North Counties, and World Vision will distribute WFP rations in Aweil South and Aweil East Counties.

STEINFELD